

CLAIMS

Claim 1. A zither, comprising:

- 5 a rigid, hollow, lightweight, non-organic frame,
extending around the outer periphery of the instrument to
provide a stable support for the strings, unaffected by
string tension or humidity, and providing sufficient
strength to support double string options; and
10 an easily removable rear panel to permit interchangeability
of panel units as well as the expansion of the sound box.

Claim 2. A zither with increased range,
comprising:

- 15 a frame element surrounding a resonance chamber
and supporting a plurality of strings; and a chord bar
retaining assembly, which is quickly and easily replaced
with a second chord bar retaining assembly, having different
chord bars, permitting the playing of multiple chords with a
20 single instrument.

- Claim 3. A chorded zither of superior quality
and versatility, wherein the outer profile of the instrument
is defined by a continuous band of lightweight metal, such
25 that when the band is closed at the top and bottom, it forms
a sound chamber; said band not being distorted by heat and
humidity, forms a stable base for the strings and top and
bottom closures.

- 30 Claim 4. A chorded zither of claim 3, wherein
the device is capable of supporting double strings.

- Claim 5. A chorded zither, as in claim 3, and
further including interchangeable top and bottom closures.
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Claim 6. A chord bar retaining assembly, as in claim 2, and further including a chord bar with an attached device, such that when said chord bar is depressed in a normal playing mode, said device bridges over the adjacent
5 chord bar to contact a given string to eliminate said string's objectionable-sounding harmonic tone.

Claim 7. A chorded zither, including a frame, / front and rear panels, wherein the front and rear panels are
10 quickly and easily replaced since the frame is independently strong enough to resist the stresses normally associated with the instrument.

Claim 8. A chorded zither as in claim 7, wherein
15 the frame is strong enough to resist the stress generated by double strings.

Claim 9. A chorded zither as in claim 7, wherein the volume of the sound chamber may be varied.